

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BUCHAREST 000175

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EUR/NCE - WILLIAM SILKWORTH
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [RO](#)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT BASESCU OUTLINES FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES

REF: BUCHAREST 153

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE PROTECT ACCORDINGLY.

11. (SBU) Summary. President Basescu's first major foreign policy address, delivered to Romania's diplomatic corps on January 18, set benchmarks for an active foreign policy agenda during his first term. Tackling corruption, continuing progress toward EU accession and strengthening Romania's strategic partnership with the U.S. and secondarily, the U.K. were singled out as top priorities. Basescu devoted special attention to Romania's role in bolstering stability and security in the Black Sea region and the Western Balkans. He also pledged to maintain Romania's military commitments to NATO operations and in Iraq. Strengthening Romania's unique relationship with neighboring Moldova, while developing more cooperative relations with Ukraine and a more "pragmatic" relationship with Russia also were highlighted as top priorities for the new administration. End Summary.

European Union Accession 2007: Full Steam Ahead

12. (SBU) President Basescu delivered his first major foreign policy address to Bucharest's diplomatic corps on January 18, accompanied by his foreign policy advisors, Prime Minister Calin Popescu Tariceanu, and former Liberal-Democratic (PNL-PD) alliance presidential candidate Teodor Stolojan. The well-polished and characteristically forthright address touched on key themes from the PNL-PD alliance electoral campaign, while also signaling Basescu's energetic approach to Romanian foreign policy. Characterizing 2005 as a "decisive" year, Basescu reiterated his support for Romania's anticipated 2007 accession to the European Union, while pledging to tackle the country's rampant corruption as a matter of national security. He also voiced his desire for a "strong Romania," complete with economic and social reform and modernization, "inside a strong Europe."

13. (SBU) Basescu highlighted Romania's future position along the EU's easternmost border, calling for Romania to serve as a "pillar of stability and security in and between the Black Sea region and the Western Balkans." According to Basescu, Romania will seek to attract Western investment in regional infrastructure, energy, communications and trade projects. Characterizing recent political developments in Georgia and Ukraine as positive, Basescu pledged to build new regional "bridges of cooperation" in political, economic, and security spheres, while also working to "anchor" Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, Ukraine and Georgia to Europe.

Romanian-Moldovan Relations Receive Top Billing

14. (SBU) Basescu bluntly stated that Moldova's "European future" was a "moral obligation" of Romania. As such, he outlined the Moldovan-Romanian relationship as a top priority for his presidential mandate. He pledged Romania's support for Moldova's path to EU integration and greater social and economic stability. Basescu directly addressed Romania's stake in resolving the Transnistria conflict, urging observance of the OSCE Istanbul commitments on Transnistria and calling for a more active EU and U.S. role in resolving the conflict. Taking a more nationalistic tone, he also alluded to the need to protect Romanian language, culture and traditions within Moldova while emphasizing the need to bring stability to Moldova, a critical area lying at both Romania's eastern border and the future border of the EU. While urging the development of more cooperative relations with Ukraine, Basescu called for developing a more pragmatic relationship, especially in the economic field, with Russia.

Transatlantic Ties: NATO, U.S. and U.K.

15. (SBU) A hallmark of his presidential campaign, Basescu again singled out the strategic U.S.-Romanian relationship as a benchmark of Romania's foreign policy. Basescu urged an intense dialogue with the U.S. and praised U.S. support for Romania's political, economic, military and administrative reform. Basescu defined Romania's ongoing commitment to the global war on terror, full participation in NATO, adherence to "common democratic values", pursuit of enhanced economic relations, and future cooperation on the "Greater Black Sea projects" as key pillars of the U.S.-Romanian strategic partnership.

16. (SBU) Basescu described Romania's partnership with European states as the cornerstone of the country's successful European integration. Within that rubric, Basescu highlighted a desire to further develop a privileged Romanian-U.K. relationship, evidenced by his statement that he will pay his first official visit to the United Kingdom by the end of January.

Minorities and Human Rights

17. (SBU) Basescu took a step back from the foreign policy focus of his address to voice support for minority rights within Romania, while dismissing the possibility of "autonomy on ethnic grounds," a proposal often raised by some in Romania's more radical ethnic Hungarian community. In sharp contrast to the occasional anti-Semitic statements and actions of former President Iliescu, Basescu flatly stated that he would "be intransigent with any kind of extremist, xenophobic or ant-Semitic manifestation." He further pledged to support the work of the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania (Wiesel Commission) and to advance Holocaust education initiatives. Employment and educational opportunities for the Roma community also were outlined along with his support for "genuine public-private partnerships" in developing Romania's foreign policy, especially regarding Romania's European integration.

Ongoing Commitment to Iraq

18. (SBU) Basescu pledged to fulfill Romania's commitments alongside coalition partners in Iraq and voiced the GOR's support for Iraqi reconstruction and rehabilitation projects. With Romania's position as a non-permanent member on the UN Security Council, Basescu characterized Romania as a "responsible and predictable partner" while calling for a "new consensus on global security."

19. (SBU) Comment: Basescu's first major foreign policy address outlined a vigorous agenda, especially in regional affairs, including Moldova and Ukraine. His continued emphasis on strong relations with the U.S. and U.K. tracks with what he has said repeatedly during and after his presidential campaign. Romanians are now watching to see how Basescu matches his broad vision on foreign policy and other issues with concrete steps, as the government prepares to appoint officials to the roughly sixty senior sub-ministerial positions key in implementing the new government's plan. End Comment.

110. (U) AmEmbassy Bucharest's reporting telegrams are available on the Bucharest SIPRNET Website: www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/bucharest.

DELARE